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Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions

Letter dated 31 October 2002 from the President of the Economic and Social Council addressed to the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women

The session of the Economic and Social Council in July 2002 confirmed the Council's increasing vitality as a forum for helping move forward the implementation of the United Nations development agenda, which has been sharply defined through the United Nations conferences since the 1990s, in particular the Millennium Summit, the International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg.

Held between the conferences in Monterrey and Johannesburg, the high-level segment served to galvanize political support for the health and education goals of the Millennium Summit and other conferences, adopting a ministerial declaration on the contribution of human resources development, including in the area of health and education, to the process of development (E/2002/L.13). The declaration gave concrete content to the policies and means required to implement the relevant Millennium development goals, providing guidance that will be important for the commission's future work on health and education and human and institutional capacity-building.

I should like especially to reflect on some of the important decisions made by the Council concerning the functional commissions. A list of these resolutions, agreed conclusions and decisions adopted by the Council specifically calling for action by functional commissions is attached for reference (see annex). I should like to draw your particular attention to the agreed conclusions 2002/1 of the Council's coordination segment on "Strengthening further the Economic and Social Council, building on its recent achievements, to help it fulfil the role ascribed to it in the Charter of the United Nations as contained in the Millennium Declaration (E/2002/L.35)". In paragraph 13 of the agreed conclusions, the Council called upon functional commissions to further enhance their role as the main forums for expert

* E/CN.6/2002/L.9.

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follow-up and review of United Nations conferences and summits and invited the functional commissions to provide inputs to the overall theme of the Council's coordination and high-level segments as they related to their area of work. Furthermore, in paragraph 21, the Council requested that reports of the functional commissions focus on substantive issues and highlight coordination, coherence and harmonization issues requiring the Council's attention. The Council will examine the outcomes of the functional commissions on the basis of their reports and the consolidated report on their work.

In its resolution 2002/23, the Council called upon functional commissions to intensify their efforts to mainstream gender perspectives in their work (para. 5) and to continue their efforts to address gender perspectives in relation to the thematic issues of their multi-year programmes of work or in relation to annual themes (para. 6). It further called upon them to increase their collaboration with the Commission on the Status of Women and encouraged this Commission to continue its efforts to highlight gender perspectives in the work of the Council and its other subsidiary bodies (para. 8). The Council furthermore called upon the bureaux of its subsidiary bodies to consider how best to facilitate specific gender discussions in their work (paras. 7 and 8).

I should be grateful if you would bring these policy recommendations to the attention of your Commission and take the necessary action to implement them. I would also like to invite you to inform the Council, at your earliest convenience following the session, of any specific follow-up actions your Commission has taken. As you know, developments and issues in this regard will be discussed at the next session of the Economic and Social Council. I will contact you as soon as the Council decides the themes of the 2003 high-level and coordination segments so that we can see how the Commission on the Status of Women can best contribute to the work of the Council on these issues.

Finally, I should like to take this opportunity to thank you once again for your participation in the meeting of the Council in July, as well as in the meeting between the bureaux and the chairs of all the Commissions. I will be looking forward to our continuing collaboration and to any suggestions you may have on how to strengthen interaction among the functional Commissions and the Council, including at our joint meetings. Your cooperation will ensure and enhance the coordination of the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies, which is all the more important as we move into a key phase focused on the implementation of recent conferences.

(*Signed*) Ivan **Šimonović**

Annex

List of resolutions and decisions adopted by the Council in 2002 requesting follow-up by the functional commissions

E/2002/L.13	Ministerial declaration of the high-level segment submitted by the President of the Council on the basis of informal consultations.
E/2002/L.35	Strengthening further the Economic and Social Council, building on its recent achievements, to help it fulfil the role ascribed to it in the Charter, as contained in the Millennium Declaration (agreed conclusions adopted at the coordination segment).
2002/23	Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system.
2002/34	International Conference on Financing for Development.

The full text of these resolutions are available on the web site of the Economic and Social Council: http//www.un.org/esa/coordination/ecosoc.